

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5406

As Passed House:

April 5, 2005

Title: An act relating to making medicare supplemental insurance policies administered under chapter 41.05 RCW conform to federal law.

Brief Description: Modifying medicare supplemental insurance policy provisions to conform to federal law.

Sponsors: By Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Franklin, Parlette and Keiser).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Health Care: 3/17/05, 3/18/05 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 4/5/05, 94-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Conforms state statutes related to Medicare supplemental insurance policies with the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Cody, Chair; Campbell, Vice Chair; Morrell, Vice Chair; Bailey, Ranking Minority Member; Curtis, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Appleton, Clibborn, Green, Hinkle, Lantz, Moeller, Schual-Berke and Skinner.

Staff: Dave Knutson (786-7146).

Background:

The Health Care Authority (Authority) is required to make available to retired and disabled employees at least two Medicare supplemental insurance policies. One of the policies must include coverage for prescription drugs. In 2003, Congress enacted the Medicare Modernization Act which provides prescription drug coverage through the Medicare program.

Summary of Bill:

The Authority will offer to eligible retired and disabled employees one or more Medicare supplemental insurance policies that conform to minimum standards adopted by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. In addition to retired or disabled state employees, retired or disabled school district employees, and retired employees of county, municipal, or other political subdivisions, these Medicare supplemental insurance policies will be available to surviving spouses of emergency service personnel killed in the line of duty.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This legislation is needed to bring state statutes in line with the Medicare drug coverage expansion.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Keiser, prime sponsor; and Richard Onizuka, Health Care Authority.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.